



Nevada Operations Office News

News Media Contact

Derek S. Scammell, 702-295-3521
Scammelld@nv.doe.gov
David Schwoegler, 925-422-6900
Newsguy@llnl.gov

For Immediate Release

September 26, 2001

Subcritical Experiment Conducted Successfully at the National Nuclear Security Administration's Nevada Test Site

The National Nuclear Security Administration's Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory conducted *Oboe 8*, at **1:47 p.m.** (PDT) today, at the Nevada Test Site.

Data from monitoring instruments confirmed that the experiment was subcritical, that is, no self-sustaining nuclear chain reaction occurred.

Oboe 8 is the seventh in the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory *Oboe* series of subcritical experiments. The experiments are designed to answer questions about ejecta and spall associated with plutonium. Ejecta is a violent spray of particles that are propelled from a material's surface when it is compressed by a powerful shock wave. Spall is the breakup of material from the explosive shock wave reflected back from the surface.

Subcritical experiments are scientific experiments to obtain technical information in support of the Department of Energy's program to maintain the safety and reliability of the nuclear weapons stockpile without underground nuclear testing.